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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of parental participation in school on the assistance parents could give their children outside of the classroom. A Parent Involvement Program was developed in the Mesa, Arizona Title I schools to help raise the consistently low reading readiness scores of the kindergarteners in these schools. A random proportional stratified sample was selected from 14 kindergarten classrooms in five of these schools: 40 students whose parents did not participate in the program and 40 students whose parents did participate. Parents received instruction twice a week in working effectively with their children, making reading games, and teaching in the kindergarten classroom one day a week. The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test on letter names was administered as a pre- and post-test (the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test on phonemes was also administered as a post-test). Results showed that all children who were taught by the parents mastered the beginning skill of letter recognition, regardless of whether their own parents attended the Parent Involvement Program. However, in the more difficult task of learning phonemes, the children whose own parents attended the program learned more letter sounds than children whose own parents did not attend. (CS)

THE EFFECT OF THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM ON READING READINESS SCORES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A major problem faced by educators has been the lack of readiness of economically disadvantaged children to enter into a formal school program. Since the child is exposed to parental influence more than school influence, many programs have been designed to educate the parents on how best to work with their youngsters. Although many such programs have been initiated, it is yet to be determined what is the most effective approach.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The kindergarten children in the Title I schools in Mesa have consistently scored lower in the area of reading readiness than the kindergarteners in non-title schools. A Parent Involvement Program was developed in the Title I schools to raise the reading readiness levels of these children. The parents receive instruction twice a week in working effectively with their children, making reading games, and teaching in the kindergarten classroom one day a week. Recent studies have shown that this type of program has significantly raised the achievement pattern of the economically and socially deprived youngsters. (Barnard: 1972, Parks: 1972) The untested assumption

was that the parents who attended this program regularly should be able to provide assistance outside of school for their kindergarten children in addition to helping in the classroom. Although all children received assistance from parents in the classroom, the assumption is that those children whose parents participated directly should show greater growth than those children whose parents did not attend.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

1) There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores made by children whose parents participated and those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom, as measured by the letter recognition sections of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test.

2) There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores made by children whose parents participated and those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom, as measured by the phoneme section of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test.

ASSUMPTIONS

In the initial organization of the research it was necessary to make several assumptions:

1) The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test selected for measurement in this study is valid for this population.

2) Teachers involved in this study worked equally with children whose parents participated as with children whose parents did not participate.

3) The phoneme section of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test was given to thirty children as a pretest and all thirty scored zero. The test was discontinued because it was too difficult and frustrating for the children. It is assumed that all the children in this study would have scored zero on this pretest.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terms used in this study may require identification. The terms are as follows:

Educationally Deprived Children

> "...those children who have need for special educational assistance in order that their level of educational attainment may be raised to that appropriate for children of their age. The term includes children who are handicapped or whose needs for such

special educational assistance result from poverty, neglect, delinquency, or cultural or linguistic isolation from the community at large." (HEW)

Reading Readiness

"The general stage of developmental maturity and preparedness at which a child can learn to read easily and proficiently in a regular classroom setting when exposed to good teaching." (Rogers: 1971, p. 3)

Title I Schools

"Schools selected for Title I projects which on the basis of the best available information, have high concentrations of children from low-income families." (HEW)

LIMITATIONS

1) The study was confined to five Title I Schools in the Mesa Area.

2) The study was limited to the kindergarten grade level.

3) The study is limited to the effects of parental involvement on the child's learning of letter names and phonemes.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

THEORETICAL BASE

The participation of parents in their children's learning experiences is deemed essential for effective pre-school programs. (Gordon: 1972, Mathews: 1972, Malcolm: 1972) The need to educate parents was clearly stated by Nadine Newcomb (1974), director of "Good Start" classes in New York. She states that "parenthood is the only profession for which no training is required in our society. Yet parents are the most important influences in their child's pre-school years, the years when children are programed for the rest of their lives." (Newcomb: p. 545)

The first five years of a child's life are the most productive years for learning as this is the period when the brain is growing most rapidly. Parents, more than anyone else, are in contact with a child of pre-school age and need to know how to assist their child in gaining the necessary skills for the learning process. (Newcomb: 1974) After reviewing numerous projects, Katrina de Hersch concluded that an early

childhood intervention program: 1) cannot involve mothers early enough, 2) must develop a trusting relationship between mother and school personnel, and 3) should have a program which is an out-growth of the child's home development.

One of the assumptions of having parents help in the classroom is that they often relate better to a child of a similiar economic background than does a teacher from a different economic background. Patricia Olmsted (1972) conducted a study to see if mothers' teaching styles vary according to socio-economic backgrounds. Two groups of mothers and children were sampled. One group of 39 were taken from a University Lab School and clearly identified as middle income or higher. Another group of 32 was selected from a low income housing development and identified as lower income. The children were from kindergarten age to third grade in equal proportions in both groups.

The teaching tool was adopted from the Eight Block Sort used by Hess and Shipman. (1968) The parents were taught various ways of grouping the blocks into sets and then asked to teach this to their children. While the mother taught her child, a trained administrator sat near by using an observation checklist and

tape recorder. Such phenomena as how the mother controlled and reinforced her child were observed.

The results showed a marked difference between teaching styles of mothers from different socio-economic groups. There were no differences in the mothers teaching according to the age child she was working with.

SUPPORT FOR A STRUCTURED READINESS PROGRAM

Although there is little question regarding the value of parental involvement, some investigators also believe that the program needs to be highly structured. Stanchfield (1971) experimented with a variety of materials and methods in teaching beginning reading to first graders.

She developed a research design to teach skills in a sequential, developmental order in six major areas:

1) listening for comprehension of content
2) listening for auditory discrimination
3) visual discrimination skills
4) oral language skills
5) motor-perception skills and
6) sound-symbol correspondence skills

Seventeen kindergarten classes in Los Angeles Schools were selected to provide a cross-section of socio-economic levels representing ethnic categories

of Black, Mexican-American and White children. Each experimental school was matched to a similiar control school, matching ethnic origins, academic achievements, and socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers were randomly selected. The teachers in the experimental programs were given teacher guides to follow while control groups taught as usual. The teachers in the experimental group used flannel boards and pocket charts, chalk-boards, flannel board cut-outs, puppets, picture cards and books.

The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test was given. The scores indicated that a) experimental group scored higher than control group, b) girls scored higher than boys, c) the "other white" achieved higher scores than Mexican-Americans and Blacks; however, the Mexican-American and Blacks in the experimental group scored higher than whites in the control group. Stanchfield concluded that children being taught in structured sequential programs with appropriate materials achieved significantly more than children in regular kindergarten curriculum.

TRAINING OF PARENTS

Although it has been shown that the most effective early childhood reading readiness programs involve parents, the parents frequently need training to help them teach their children.

Yaman and Hadson (1971) experimented to determine if parents could be trained to work in a home-based program (called PAL) with their own child, by using a pamphlet developed for this purpose. They developed a pamphlet and sampled it with twenty seventh and eighth grade students. The reading ability of these students ranged from sixth to eleventh grade level as measured by the California Test of Basic Skills. This was considered comparable to the parents who would be using the pamphlet.

The students were evaluated individually immediately after they finished studying their parent guide. Three instruments were used to measure the effectiveness of the booklet. First, the students were given 10 program words to be sounded out and read. The evaluator recorded the correct and incorrect responses. Second, the students conducted a practice exercise and the evaluator played the role of the child and recorded correct and incorrect responses. Third, the students were given twelve questions regarding the basic information of the

PAL program included in the guide.

The students with higher reading scores scored higher than the students with lower reading scores, but only at the extremes were the differences substantial. There was little variance among the tests of separate measures. An item analysis of each of the three tests was conducted to determine which of the items was the hardest to learn. This data became the basis for subsequent revisions. The results indicate that the Parent Guide was successful in instructing pupils to use the PAL program and could probably be refined to use with parents.

Santelli (1972) also attempted to develop training for parents. He wanted to train parents of emotionally disturbed children to help their own children. Two groups of emotionally disturbed children, ranging from five to eleven years old, received training in communication problems. One group received training on parent child relationships and the other group received training on parent child relationships in addition to sessions on developing healthy maritial relationships.

Five paper and pencil and three interpersonal process measures, to be used while the parent works with his child, were administered to both groups during the two weeks prior to the sessions, and two weeks after

the last group sessions.

He found no significant difference between the two groups of parents. This seems to indicate that it is more important to train parents to work with their children rather than counseling them in related family areas.

A study on the influence of child's age, economic status, sex of parent and other variables on parental participation in school was done by Michael. (1973)

A random sampling of the East Side of Manhattan Slum area was made to select one adult and all ten to nineteen year olds in that household. (Michael: 1971) This netted five hundred twenty-seven adult-adolescent pairs. Interviewers were matched to families on the basis of ethnic factors. The adult interviewer gathered data on parents' attitudes, activities, primary group ties, social class and demographic characteristics. Parent participation was measured by an index of 1) how many times parents visited school in past year 2) if parents belong to PTA and 3) placement of child in non-public school.

The data indicated that a) Mothers participate more actively than fathers in school parental involvement functions and both mother and father participate more than parent (except Puerto Ricans whose fathers

participated the most). b) There is declining rate of participation with a child's maturation, since the magnitude of the parental obligations for nurturance etc. varies inversely with their child's age. c) The higher socio-economic families have a higher rate of parental participation in the schools. Parental participation tends to reinforce youngsters' conformity to school cultures.

The study indicates that it would be easier to interest parents in a Parent Involvement Program that is geared for mothers of preschool and kindergarteners. The very lowest socio-economic families are harder to get involved than other families in different economic brackets.

STUDIES OF READINESS PROGRAMS INVOLVING PARENTS

Mann (1970) initiated a program to see if low income mothers of two year old children could be trained to improve the language development of their child. The mothers were divided into three groups. In the language treatment group, the children received treatment involving verbal reinforcements, elaboration and extension, for one and one-half hours, two days per week, for ten weeks. At the same time the mothers were paid to participate and received a combination

of observation, discussion and micro-teaching. Mothers in the counseling treatment group received counseling for three hours each day, one day each week for ten weeks. The mothers in the control group received no training.

The counseling group and the control group showed no significant differences in the syntax style of the children as measured by a trained observer. They concluded that a structured language training program for lower socio-economic mothers of culturally disadvantaged two year old children is an effective way of changing the syntax style of the child.

A study by Greathouse (1972) also indicates that a great deal of teaching can be done by parents. She experimented to determine the effect of Toy Talk on low income black mothers and their pre-school children. Twelve low income black mothers volunteered to participate in this seven week program with their preschoolers. The parents had four demonstration meetings and each mother began using Toy Talk procedures weekly at home with her child. Investigators made home visits to discuss the mother's progress, new toys and unit plans.

As a pretest and posttest, a "Parent as a Teacher" inventory was designed to measure the mothers

self-concept as a learner. Each mother kept a time index of vocabulary gains of her child.

Greathouse concluded that:

1) The mother's self-concept as a teacher changed significantly.
2) The mothers made a significant gain in their knowledge about the teaching-learning process.
3) The child's self-concept as a learner changed significantly.
4) Vocabulary growth of the children seemed to have increased significantly.
5) Overall results of Toy Talk indicated more teaching-learning can occur in the home than previously assumed.

It is difficult to determine how much these attitudes would have changed due to maturation, and it would be interesting to compare the results with those of a control group.

Another program involving parents was named "Good Start". (Newcomb: 1974) Classes were held at Glassmore Public Library in New Jersey. The teacher and aides began to make house to house visits in the poorer sections to recruit mothers of pre-school children.

Twelve mothers and eighteen children were involved.

Two hour meetings were held on Tuesday mornings with the parents and children meeting separately, and again on Thursday for both children and parents together. The parents are shown toys and instructed on how best to use them with their child. Reading Readiness was also taught by showing the parents how to teach sight words to their children at home.

Information was collected from interviews with parents who had completed the program. The results showed that mothers appreciated and supported the program and continued a similiar program of their own after the structured program was completed.

In another study in the Tucson Public School district, Parks (1972) set up a program to involve parents of low achieving kindergarteners. The goal for the parents was to have them become more aware of their roles as teachers and to assume more responsibility in the education of their children. The goal for the children was that they would improve their attitudes towards themselves and others, improve their physical well-being and skills, and increase intellectual development with emphasis on language.

Two hundred twenty-eight children participated in this project. Two plans were implemented. In one plan the parents attended one session each week and the

children attended five half days each week. In the second plan the parents attended one session every other week and the children attended two hour sessions three days each week. The teachers modeled the consistant behavior with the program goals for parents and aides to copy.

There was a significant improvement in the social, intellectual and physical achievement of the children who participated in this program versus children not in the program, as measured by test results on the Preschool Inventory and Evaluation Scale for Four and Five Year Old Children. Parents developed significantly more positive attitudes towards their children as measured by a questionnaire developed by the staff.

Although it is difficult to determine how much of the childrens' achievements were due to their parents participating, the parent questionnaire indicates that the parents themselves gained from the program.

A parent involvement program was initiated in Mesa, Arizona to determine the effects of parent and child incentives on the acquisition of reading readiness skills. (Barnard: 1972)

Kindergarten children from four Title I Schools in the Mesa School District were randomly selected

as the sample. They were divided into four incentive groups: 1) incentives to children 2) incentives to parents 3) incentives to children and parents, and 4) no incentives. The parents in all the groups created reading readiness games designed to teach the critical reading skills. Parents played these with the children in the classrooms. The children were pretested and posttested with the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test.

There was no statistically significant gain in reading readiness skills by those students who received incentives and those who did not. However, all the classes who had parental involvement scored higher than other Title I and non-Title I schools without parental involvement.

SUMMARY

There are many articles describing parental involvement programs; however, there is little comparative research available. The review of the research indicates that 1) parents are critical in the child's learning during the pre-school years (Newcomb, de Hersch, Olmsted, Greathouse, Barnard) 2) training of parents is a necessity for effective results (Yamen and Hadson, Santelli, Newcomb) 3) a structured program tends to produce achievement results better than non-structured programs. (Stanchfield)

Only one study was located that was designed specifically to train and involve parents in teaching better names and sounds to pre-school children. However, this study did not seek to assess the influence of parental participation in school on the assistance the parent can give his child outside of the classroom. This study seeks to answer this question.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECTS AND SELECTION METHODS

Fourteen kindergaten classes in Mesa from five Title I Schools have participated in the Parent Involvement Program for the entire 1973-74 school year. The transient rate at these schools is higher than at other district schools and although three hundred thirty-eight children were exposed to the program, only two hundred sixty-nine children stayed at their same school for the entire school year. One hundred five parents, which is over one third the total number of parents, participated in the program.

A random proportional stratified sample, from five schools, of forty students whose parents did not attend and of forty students whose parents did attend were selected for this study. Every school participating in the Parent Involvement Program was represented. Students were selected by using random numbers provided by the Arizona State University computer center.

DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENTS EMPLOYED

The Murphy-Durrell Letter Recognition Sub-Test consists of twenty-six rows of capital letters and twenty-six rows of small letters, each having five different letters in a row. The child was then told a letter and asked to put an X on it.

The Murphy-Durrell Phomeme Sub-Test consists of twenty-four rows with four pictures in each row. The child was instructed to put an X on any pictures that had the same phoneme as the sample words he listened to. The test covered initial consonants, blends, and digraphs and final consonant sounds.

The reliability of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test allows a high degree of confidence in its stability. The standard error of measurement for the letter names section is 2.4 and the odd-even reliability coefficient is .97. The standard error of measurement for the phonemes section is 2.5 and the odd-even reliability coefficient is .94. (Murphy-Durrell: 1965)

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

It was planned that both the letter name and phoneme sub-test of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test would be administered for both the pretest and posttest. However, the children scored extremely low on the letter names pretest and the phoneme test was very frustrating for them. After testing forty-five children with the phoneme test, and all forty-five receiving scores of zero, it was decided not to continue the phoneme test. For this reason the results of the pretest administered in September 1973, consisted of only the letter name section. The posttest administered in April 1974 consisted of both the letter name and phoneme sections with the second section given on the following day. Trained aides administered these tests to children in groups of four using markers to help the children stay in the right place. If a child was not able to answer any of the first five questions on either sub-test, the aide terminated the test by asking him to identify one of the pictures that appeared on the test so that the child could answer correctly and not experience frustration.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The four program aides were trained for two weeks before the program began by a program coordinator. They received instructions in the teaching of reading, and working effectively with both parents and children. They received additional weekly training throughout the school year.

Before the program started, the aides made house calls to all the parents whose children were attending schools where the program was offered. They informed them about the program and invited them to attend.

The parents attended the Parent Involvement Program two days each week. At the first weekly session, parents were shown games that could be adapted to teach a range of skills from matching letters through blending sounds to create new words. The parent was given materials to copy the games, being sure to gear them to the needs of his own child. Parents then discussed all the possible ways their game could be played and sampled the games themselves.

The following day, the parents received instruction on many different topics that helped them work with the children in the classroom and their own child at home. Such topics as the sounds letters make, blending sounds, word families and listening effectively to

their child were all discussed. Next, the parents went into the classrooms with the games that they made and worked with groups of two to four children for about forty minutes. The parents were then given the games to take home with them to reinforce the skills on each game with their own kindergartener.

A nursery was provided for younger children while parents attended these workshops.

All the children in the random sampling received instruction one day each week from the parents. The group of kindergarteners whose parents did not come are the control group and the group of kindergarteners whose parents were involved in the program are the experimental group.

The pretest letter recognition scores of the control and experimental group will be compared with an independent t-test. If the differences on this test are statistically significant at the .05 level, then a gain test will be run to compare the two groups' achievement. Otherwise an independent t-test will be used to compare the two groups on the letter names test.

The control and experimental groups will also be compared by the posttest raw scores on the phoneme test. Since this test had to be abandoned at the beginning of the year because it was too difficult

for the children to score above zero and it created frustration, the two groups will be compared by their posttest scores with an independent t-test.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

It is the purpose of this chapter to analyze the data from the study as it pertains to questions posed in Chapter I:

1) Were there statistically greater gains made by children whose parents participated over those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom as measured by the letter recognition sections?

2) Were there statistically greater gains made by children whose parents participated over those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom as measured by the phoneme sections?

The two random samplings involved in this study originally considered forty individuals in each group. For greater reliability any student who was unable to participate in all tests administered was not considered in the final results. The number of children completing

the criteria in the experimental group was thirty-nine and the number in the control group was thirty-eight.

The findings of this study are shown in Table I, below.

Table I

A Comparison of Murphy-Durrell Letter Names Test Scores

		Parents Attend n = 39	Parents Do Not Attend n = 38	t-ratio
Pretest	Mean	31.95	12.08	5.04**
	Quartile	Low B	C	
	SD	18.15	16.40	
Posttest	Mean	50.03	46.08	3.56**
	Quartile	A	A	
	SD	1.44	6.78	
Gains		18.08	33.95	-4.21**
t-ratio		6.77**	14.32**	

* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .01 level

The above table indicates that both groups made significant gains in letter recognition skills scoring very near the top limits of the test, with parental assistance. The Murphy-Durrell Letter Name Test consists of recognizing twenty-six lower case letters and twenty-six capital letters. This means that the maximum score that can be obtained is fifty-two.

The children whose parents attended had a pretest mean of 31.95 which is in the low "B" quartile and the children whose parents did not attend had a pretest mean of 12.08 which is in the "C" quartile. The post-test scores indicate that the children whose parents attended scored a mean of 50.03 and the children whose parents did not attend scored a mean of 46.08. Both groups had their posttest mean in the "A" quartile as defined by the Murphy-Durrell Test Guide. Although the children whose parents attended the program scored statistically significantly higher than the children whose parents did not attend, the two groups were so significantly different in their pretest scores that they cannot be accurately compared by matching posttest scores.

Since the two groups were completely different in their pretest scores, their potential gains was very different. The experimental group, with a pretest mean of 31.95, could realize a maximum gain, as measured by this test, of only 20.05*; the control group on the other hand, with a pretest score of 12.08, could realize a maximum gain of 39.92.* The group whose parents did not attend made gains of 33.95 and the group whose parents did attend made gains of 18.08. These gains show that the children whose parents did not attend

made statistically significant greater gains as measured by this test because of the ceiling effect.

When the gains are viewed in proportion to the possible gain for each group, the control group attained an 85 percent gain, while the experimental group attained a 90 percent gain.

Twelve of the thirty-nine children in the experimental group scored fifty-two out of fifty-two in the posttest, and although their gains are not high on this test, this test did not measure how much more they knew beyond the letter names. Therefore, the first hypothesis should be rejected with the previously mentioned qualifications in mind. There were statistically greater gains at the .01 level, by children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom, than by children whose parents did participate.

The phoneme section of the Murphy-Durrell Test was advanced and much more difficult than the letter name section. When the phoneme pretest was administered to thirty children randomly at the beginning of the Parent

* This number was derived by subtracting the pretest score from the total score possible on the letter names test.

Involvement Program, all thirty scored zero and experienced frustration. For these reasons it was decided to discontinue this pretest and assume that all the children would have scored zero. Table 12 below shows the comparison of the Murphy-Durrell Phoneme Posttest.

Table 12

A Comparison of Murphy-Durrell Phoneme Posttest (48 possible)

	Mean	Quartile	SD	t-ratio
Parents Attend n = 39	46.12	A	2.88	4.212
Parents Do Not Attend n = 38	40.24	B	8.23	

d.f. = 75

* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .01 level

Table 12 above shows that the children whose parents attended scored a mean of 46.21 ("A" quartile) and the children whose parents did not attend scored a mean of 40.24. ("B" quartile) The t-ratio indicates that this

is a statistically significant difference at the .01 level. This is based on the assumption that the groups were equal on their pretest scores. The standard deviation of 2.88 of the experimental group indicates that the children were homogeneous in their scores. The standard deviation of 8.23 in the control group indicates that these children's scores had a wide range. These results indicate that the second null hypothesis should be rejected. The children whose parents participated improved statistically significantly higher on the phoneme test as compared to the children whose own parents did not participate, but had the benefit of other parents helping in the classroom.

Although no other study was located that compared children whose own parents attend a Parent Involvement Program with children who are taught by other parents, studies have been done comparing children whose parents attend Parent Involvement Programs with children who are not exposed to the program. These studies indicate that the children involved in the program scored higher than children whose parents are not. (Barnard, Parks, Mann, Greathouse, Newcomb)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

A Parent Involvement Program was developed in the Mesa Title I schools to help raise the consistently low reading readiness scores of the kindergarteners in those six schools. The parents received instruction once each week in working effectively with their children and by constructing numerous games to reinforce reading readiness skills. The following day the parents taught children in the classroom in small groups, using the games they created. The parents' younger children were supervised in a nursery while the parents participated.

Recent studies have shown this type of program to be very beneficial in helping all of the children in the classroom; however, the effect of this program on children whose parents attend compared to children involved in the Parent Involvement Program whose parents do not attend has never been determined. It was the purpose of this paper to determine if there is a statistical significant difference in the critical reading readiness skills between these two groups of children. The two hypotheses were:

1) There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores made by children

whose parents participated and those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom, as measured by the letter recognition sections of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test.

2) There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores made by children whose parents participated and those children whose parents did not participate, but had the benefit of all parents helping in the classroom, as measured by the phoneme section of the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test.

The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test on letter names was administered in September and again in April. The Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Test on phonemes was administered to thirty children in September and all thirty scored zero and experienced frustration. This pretest was discontinued with the assumption that all children would have scored zero. The test was administered again in April.

A random proportional stratified sample, from five Title I schools, of forty students whose parents did not attend (control group) and of forty students whose parents

did attend (experimental group) were selected for this study. The children were exposed to the Parent Involvement Program in their classrooms for at least forty minutes every week.

The findings showed that on the Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis Letter Recognition Test both groups of children scored in the "A" quartile although the experimental group scored statistically significantly higher than the control group. However, the two groups were very different in their pretest scores, so it is difficult to accurately compare their posttest scores. The children whose parents did not attend had much lower pretest scores, so their potential for gains existed to a greater extent. The children whose parents attended scored significantly higher on the pretest than the control group, so the ceiling effect occurred. Twelve of them scored perfect tests although their gains were not nearly as large as children in the control group. With these qualifications in mind, the null hypothesis was rejected because children whose own parents did not attend, but were helped by other parents in the classroom, made significantly greater gains at the .01 level than children whose parents did attend.

The findings on the phoneme test indicate that the children whose own parents attended scored significantly

greater at the .01 level than children whose own parents did not attend but were helped by other parents in the classroom. Therefore, the null hypotheses was rejected.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study suggest that for learning the beginning skill of letter recognition, all children who are taught by the parents master this, regardless of whether their own parents attend the Parent Involvement Program. However, in the more difficult task of learning phonemes, the children whose own parents attend learn more letter sounds that children whose own parents do not attend but are aided in the classroom by other parents. This is based on the assumption that both groups were equal in their pretest scores.

Even though it was not a part of this study, the pretests of the letter name tests may indicate that the parents who participate in this program tend to teach their child, before he enters school, more than do parents who do not become involved with this program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This research dealt mainly with the influence of parental involvement on reading readiness scores. It would be interesting to expand the program to include math readiness and analyze the results.

2. Involvement of parents should be studied to determine if school activities had an effect on the education of the other preschool children in the home.

3. Interesting games and activities were developed in the sequential learning of reading readiness skills. A possible study would be the effectiveness of games and activities to teach the sequence of skills in other areas of the curriculum.

4. Many of the younger children of parents in the Parent Involvement Program attended the nursery. It would be interesting to see if these children will be more ready to enter school than children who did not attend the nursery.

5. It would be interesting to test the children whose parents participated in the Parent Involvement Program after they complete first grade and compare them to children who were included in the Parent Involvement Program whose parents did not attend.

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APPENDIX A

Individual Test Scores

PARENTS ATTEND	PRETEST	POSTTEST	
	Letter Names	Letter Names	Phonemes
Samuel, C.	46	50	47
Robert, H.	3	49	48
Carrie, P.	47	49	48
Bobby, A.	40	52	47
Elaine, W.	0	52	47
Shelley, D.	31	51	48
Jay, F.	45	49	45
Tammy, P.	35	49	33
Vicky, S.	44	48	48
Jenifer, A.	51	52	48
Theodore, B.	3	51	47
Timmy, L.	47	52	48
LaDonna, P.	47	48	48
Laurie, S.	23	50	47
Lamar, T.	3	49	46
Daniel, H.	21	50	40
Amy, E.	47	51	47
Sheldon, E.	44	48	47
Burke, M.	41	48	46
Barbie, D.	5	52	47
Denise, H.	40	51	48

PARENTS ATTEND	PRETEST	POSTTEST	
	Letter Names	Letter Names	Phonemes
Richard, H.	5	50	47
Linda, M.	1	49	46
Kristy, M.	46	50	48
Marc, S.	1	51	48
Alan, T.	20	50	45
Oliver, B.	49	50	46
Cynthia, E.	49	51	48
Kelli, H.	45	51	44
Athea, P.	47	48	48
Sherry-Dee, G.	36	49	42
Kevin, L.	32	51	46
Loretta, L.	11	50	41
Julie, S.	47	51	48
Teri, B.	41	51	48
Perry, R.	49	51	46
Raymond, S.	50	52	48
Christopher, S.	43	46	48
Paul, M.	11	49	45

PARENTS NOT ATTEND	PRETEST	POSTTEST	
	Letter Names	Letter Names	Phonemes
Chris, D.	1	44	35
David, F.	0	50	31
Nelson, H.	0	27	25
Lisa, H.	43	51	46
Charles, W.	2	48	43
Mike, C.	0	47	45
Joni, W.	1	52	47
Vicky, L.	1	34	29
Kathy, H.	1	41	23
Rene, D.	1	47	44
Tommy, H.	0	49	47
Kenneth, O.	0	22	34
David, W.	0	45	24
Agustin, F.	2	46	40
John, I.	3	49	45
Diana, P.	1	40	28
James, P.	0	41	32
Mary, R.	29	46	28
Jimmy, W.	46	52	48
Larry, E.	11	49	47
Monroe, L.	3	38	35
Donald, W.	5	45	44

PARENTS NOT ATTEND	PRETEST	POSTTEST	
	Letter Names	Letter Names	Phonemes
Edward, C.	30	46	46
Edward, D.	4	50	46
Joel, C.	48	51	48
Belinda, W.	2	43	28
Erin, M.	29	50	44
Tina, T.	10	50	47
Sylvia, C.	2	49	46
Curtis, M.	2	47	41
Robert, S.	35	52	46
Larry, H.	31	51	48
Alicia, H.	3	42	32
Darlene, A.	49	52	48
Robert, D.	6	52	45
Tina, G.	18	50	48
Eric, M.	3	51	48
Janae, P.	37	52	48